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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR APRIL 1, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 01, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

TERCUMAN / TURKIYE / VAKIT: After the resignation of five CHP (Republican People's Party) deputies last Monday, Diyarbakir CHP deputy Muhsin Kocyigit resigned from his party, as well.

HURRIYET / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: The "human shields" traveling in southeast Turkey made a press announcement and declared that they will change their initial route and head toward the Gabar Mountain, since operations in the Cudi Mountains have allegedly ended. Seventy-seven human shields coming from Germany, Istanbul and Batman, and 23 human shields coming from Adana, Antep and Hatay were allegedly briefly detained after their press statement. Osman Gunes, Sirnak Governor, announced that the human shield initiative would present security concerns and would disrupt peace among people.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): The policies of Kaya Mutlu, the former Mersin Mayor who served Mersin for three terms in office, are now under criticism. He reportedly had been too permissive in response to the influx of people migrating from southeastern Turkey to Mersin, which some believe shaped the roots and causes of the "flag crisis."

EKSPRES / BOLGE / SABAH (GUNEY): Mersin Municipality made available 5,000 free Turkish flags to citizens, who formed long queues in front of the Municipality to get one. Before the flag delivery began, Macit Ozcan, Mersin Mayor, said, "Not only in Mersin, but all throughout Turkey, people showed their concern about the attempt to burn the flag...As the Municipality of Mersin, we have been the ones to feel the deepest disappointment regarding the event."

OZGUR GUNDEM: The Mersin Prosecutor allegedly violated the new Turkish Penal Code by arresting an 11-year-old child, who is accused of attacking the (Turkish) flag in Mersin. The new penal code (note: originally due to come into force April 1, but the implementation of which has been postponed until June 1) stipulates that children under 12 do not have criminal liability and cannot be arrested.

SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / EKSPRES: The Adana Branch of the Turkish Journalists Union and Cukurova Journalists Association initiated a campaign to press for an amendment to the new Turkish Penal Code (TPC). They say the new code will hinder the way the journalists do their jobs in Turkey. During the campaign, people will be invited to sign a petition against the limitations in the TPC and wear a black ribbon as a sign of protest.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Irfan Ucar, Publishing Director of Ozgur Gundem, said that there were 273 ongoing lawsuits against the paper. Ozgur Gundem, demanding that the restrictions against press in the new TPC be done away with, cites a legal complaint against them by Namik Dursun (Tunceli Jandarma Commander) as the latest instance (Note: Though the news report does not elaborate, this latter instance is likely related to the case highlighted in Adana 0029).

EVRENSEL: A man in Adana filed a complaint with the Adana Prosecutor against Himi zkk, the Chief of Staff, and Mehmet Ekinci MH (atina Movement Party) Deputy National Chairperson, accusing Ozkok of provoking hostility among Kurds and Turks, and Ekinci of making insulting remarks (about Kurds) on a TV program.

RADIKAL / OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: A 55-year-old female, Sultan Erkus, was killed by the blast of a land mine when she stepped on the mine as she was grazing her farm animals in the Hazro district of Diyarbakir.

BOLGE: Kemal Sag, Adana MP from CHP (Republican People's Party), extended support to TEKEL (State Tobacco Company) workers and said that he would participate in the mass rally against privatization to be held on April 3 in Adana.

BOLGE / ZAMAN / EKSPRES: Abdullah Dogru, AKP (Justice and Development Party) Provincial Chairperson, evaluated AKP Mayors' activities at their one-year mark in office and said that people in Adana praised the services rendered by the Yuregir, Seyhan

and Adana mayors. Dogru criticized Adana AKP Mayor Aytac Durak, however, for mentioning the name of a specific bidding company when criticizing the cleaning services tender of the Seyhan Municipality. Later in his remarks, Dogru solicited support from the media against people who seek personal profit by abusing the names of people in the administrative ranks of AKP - himself included - and AKP deputies: "Spit on the faces of such people and send them all the way back", said Dogru.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. ZAMAN / EKSPRES / SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE: Moldovan Ambassador to Ankara, Victor Tvircun, paid a visit to Cahit Kirac, Adana Governor; Aytac Durak, Mayor of Adana; and Umit Ozgumus, Chairperson of the Adana Chamber of Industry (ACI). Tvircun drew attention to the trade and investment potential both of Adana and Moldova during his visit.

2. BOLGE: ISDEMIR (Iskenderun Iron and Steel factory) in Hatay, whose profits and export volume reached record-breaking figures last year, continued to fare well in the first quarter of 2005, with the export volume reaching \$77 million.

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